チョーサーの英語に見られるフランス語等の影響について

平林幹郎

The Influence of French and Other Languages on Chaucer's English

Mikio Hirabayashi

Résumé

This is the revised and enlarged version of the paper read at the 17th East Branch Congress of Japan Society for Medieval English Studies, held at Gakushuin University in Tokyo, on 30 June 2001. In this paper the present writer examines and refers to Christianity in the 14th century England, the problems of various manuscripts of Chaucer, the difference of the texts by Skeat, Robinson, and Benson, the influence of French, its expression, French spellings and pronunciation on Chaucer's English, the Germanic construction and pronunciation that are persistently alive in Chaucer's works, though few linguists would not point out, and lastly to the influence of Latin and its literature on Chaucer's English, especially to the problems of rhetoric by Ovid and Aristotle that are observable in Chaucer. In conclusion, although in the works of Chaucer many French usages are plentifully observable, the basic structure of English as a Germanic language, remained intact.

The present paper examines the influence of languages of the Continent on Chaucer's language with special reference to French, that is, Old French, Anglo-French and Northern French. Other languages of the Continent such as Latin and German are also investigated to some degree in this paper, the former being an important language since it is the language of *Metamorphoses* by Ovid, a fine specimen of rhetoric that ultimately goes back to Aristotle. As a preliminary survey we must solve the difficult problems of many different kinds of manuscript, the social conditions at those times, Chaucer's scholarly attainments on literature, French and Latin. Furthermore the effect of Norman Conquest (1066) and Guerre de Cent Ans (1337-1453) on English.

The history of the English language is relatively complicated and incoherent compared to those of languages of the Continent such as French and German. The Mediterranean civilization

had a tremendous impact on the language, literature and culture of Britain, and Latin, French and Spanish literature flowed easily and naturally into Britain. Consequently Latin and French had considerable influence on English usages, pronunciation, spelling, words that express important concepts and to some extent on the structure. Especially, as is well known, after the 11th century the heavy influx of French into English was intensified. Skeat (1891: 2nd Series: 7) says, 'During these three centuries they were continually drifting into English, but by no means at a uniform rate'

To investigate the details of the actual state of the structure of the 14th century English, we should refer only to reliable material. For that plan the works should be restricted to the literarily, stylistically excellent, representative works by great authors such as Geoffrey Chaucer (1343?-1400), or such works as *Piers Plowman* (1362-98) by William Langland and *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight* (1360-1400), the so-called typical 14th century works that are chronologically issued side by side (*cf.* Fukuhara-Toyama 1962: 38). The works of an admirable style or rhetoric by the prominent writers or poets are surely the norm of the language of that age, and are of great value to study. Of these the present writer is going to examine the language in the works of Chaucer, especially several works in *The Canterbury Tales*, written in English of Southeast of London, and to study the actual condition of the 14th century English and also analyze the influence and the degree of infiltration of the languages of the Continent into English. In the study of the medieval English literature we must be very cautious of so many problems of the manuscripts and of the attitudes and principles of various scribes in copying them. As to the reliable texts of Chaucer three are published today, that is, Reverend Skeat's (1912), Robinson's (2nd ed. 1957) and Benson's *The Riverside Chaucer* (3rd ed. 1987), on the cover of which a compliment is written by Anthony Burgess as "This is the best edition of Chaucer in existence." So it will be only proper to grasp the realities of Chaucer's English by the edition of Benson. What is particularly important is that Chaucer wrote his works not in Latin or French that was predominant at those times but in his native tongue, English, and is generally known in later ages as the Father of English poetry. Even in Germany, until the 13th century, government publications were all written in Latin without exception, but when the 14th century comes the mother tongue, German, became the leading language, the similar situation to that of Britain (*cf.* Sagara 1965: 15)

In the researches of medieval English literature we inevitably encounter various obstacles, that is, the problems of diverse manuscripts, of French, especially Old French, Anglo-French and Northern French, Latin, and of Christianity and the life of people of that age. As to the so-called original manuscript of *The Canterbury Tales* more than eighty different handwritten copies are present, and among them various separate spellings are found, since the orthography was not yet established. As Rev. Skeat (1891 2nd Series: 148) says that "the English still held, more or less securely,

a considerable portion of France, so that the presence of English officers and soldiers was constantly required there," the medieval English literature was placed under the overwhelming dominion of French literature and Latin, which fact will be partly shown by the presence of four types of French such as Old French, Anglo-French, Northern French and Modern French, and as to Latin, two types, that is, Classical Latin and Medieval Latin (*cf. OED* 1933, Vol I, p. xxxvi). As is generally known Latin was a prevailing language as a medium of Mediterranean civilization and was indispensable to the clergymen of Christianity in Britain and was also a kind of international auxiliary language of medieval Europe. So when studying Chaucer's language we must pay close attention both to four types of French and to its cognate, Latin.

Norman Davis, born in New Zealand and later a professor of English language and literature at Oxford, and had once put Chaucer on record issued by the Caedmon Record Company, wrote a fine introduction to *The Riverside Chaucer* (1987) and pointed out the distinctive grammatical features of Chaucer's English that were already abolished in Modern English such as the diverse, unstable spellings, the concord of number between noun and its determinative adjectives just like French, Latin and German and that determiners are put either before or after the noun they qualify:

> Even in some fifteenth-century manuscripts the beginning of the spelling distinction can be seen—words like *ease, peace* are usually written *ese, pes*, but occasionally *ease, peas*.
>
> (*Riverside* 1987: xxviii.)

Furthermore, as Davis says, so many French usages, cliché and grammar are drifting into Chaucer's English:

> Most attributive adjectives normally precede the nouns they qualify but in verse they often follow: *his shoures soote, hir fyngres smale, deere maister soverayn* ··· Certain set phrases regularly have this order—*(the) blood roial* ···· (*Riverside*, N. Davis: xxxiv)

Around 1381 when Chaucer was working at customhouse, London was in the middle of Peasants' Revolt, and he often cited the social environments of these years into *The Canterbury Tales*. M. M. Crow and V. E. Leland described the horrible riot and massacre of London at those times as follows:

> ··· the Rising of 1381, the Peasants' Revolt. No record tells us whether Chaucer was at Aldgate when thousands of rebels entered London through that gate or whether he saw them

burn John of Gaunt's palace, the Savoy, or whether he saw them behead Simon Sudbury, archbishop of Canterbury and chancellor of the kingdom. A number of the victims came from Vintry Ward, where Chaucer still owned his father's house; they included Richard Lyons, merchant, who had profited by lending thousands of pounds to the king; and scores of Flemings, whose headless bodies were, according to the chroniclers, left piled in the streets near the river.

(*Riverside* 1987: xviii)

The most drastic change in the history of the 14th century England was of course Guillaume le Conquérant in 1066. According to Jespersen's research (1938: 87), the influx of languages of the Continent, chiefly French, into English since Norman Conquest was the heaviest between 1350 and 1400. In addition, Reverend W. W. Skeat, a famous linguist and an excellent compiler of Chaucer's manuscripts, had investigated 32 various manuscripts of English by different authors made before 1400, and calculated that the number of French loanwords among them was 3400 in all. This fact shows that a vast number of French words, clichés, French idioms, French way of expression flowed into English and most of them still survive even in Modern English (*cf.* Kitamura 1998: 63-65). Guillaume Premier le Conquérant (= William the Conqueror) (1027?-87) was the king of England from 1066 to 1087. Guerre de Cent Ans between France and England from around 1337 until 1453 was also the years when Chaucer was actively engaged in his literary work. Under the reign of King Edward III (1327-77), a civil servant, Chaucer, had displayed his ability well in Court. According to the literature, King Edward III hardly speaks English, and at Court he carried on his work only in French, because he invaded from Northern France and his mother tongue was French. It is a well-known fact, as is clearly pointed out by many historical English linguists that in those days the status of English was very low in England compared to that of French.

Masui (Fukuhara-Masui 1962: 72-73) tells about King Edward III and the dominant language, French, that was current in Court at those days as follows:

Court of King Edward III had a reputation for luxury and splendor in Europe. Edward III hardly understands English, but a fluent speaker of French. The practices of French Court and love of French literature, especially a preference for French poems on courtly love, which being almost an imitation of France, were also in vogue in Court of England. So, for young Geoffrey, to be a well-educated person at Court was indispensable. He must be good at horse riding, and also at dancing, music, composing poems, especially at French language and its literature. (A translation by the present author)

In the 14th century when Chaucer devoted himself to the writings of poems, to join a church and to hear a sermon at Church were unfathomably important for the everyday life of common people, because at those times what Church preaches to a Christian was the social and cultural criteria, and every act of worldly things must exactly coincide with the procedure and process determined by Church. The principles and norms of everyday life were almost always based upon the Bible, and a religious life by Christianity also had a far-reaching influence on English and English literature (*cf.* Ikegami-Saito 1984: 4-7). For example, as is described in 'The Pardoner's Tale,' such acts as are shown in the following by Larry Benson are considered sins by Church:

> The sins that the Pardoner denounces—false oaths, gambling, gluttony—are the "tavern sins," a popular topic in medieval sermons, in which, as in The Pardoner's Tale, the tavern is the scene of gluttony and gambling, which leads inevitably to blasphemy. (*Riverside* 1987: 905)

In the 14th century England the Bible was written only in Latin like in medieval Germany. In England in 1525 *The New Testament* was translated for the first time into English by William Tyndale (1494?-1536) by order of King Henry VIII, and also in Germany in 1522 Martin Luther (1483-1546) translated the Bible into German, each is of course the mother tongue for the people, the language even the uneducated people such as peasants and laborers could read and understand. Latin was the language of Church at those times. Mass and a sermon were normally listened to by Latin, but practically common believers don't know Latin and could not understand what a clergyman preaches at all. Many priests and nuns do not have a good command of Latin (*cf.* Ikegami-Saito 1984: 4-7). Also in Germany until the 13th century all the government publications were written in Latin, and at last in the 14th century German became dominant and Latin had lost its position as an official language in Germany (*cf.* Sagara 1965: 15)

That Chaucer had written his poems such as *The Canterbury Tales* and others not in Latin but in English, especially English of London, is of deep significance. Before Chaucer at least for six centuries English had been used as a language of poems and prose. Although there were some dialectal varieties, until the end of the 10th century an English dialect called Late West Saxon (Saxon is *Sachse* in German) was widely used in England. However such a tradition was broken by the Norman Conquest, that is, a major political and cultural upheaval in England, and since then for a few centuries writings in English were not refined as is also pointed out by Norman Davis (*cf. Riverside* 1987: xxv). Concerning the Saxons and the Normans, a quotation from the novel by Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), *Ivanhoe* (1819), will be an interesting illustration:

"And swine is good Saxon," said the Jester; "but how call you the sow when she is flayed, and drawn, and quartered, and hung up by the heels, like a traitor? " "Pork," answered the swineherd. "I am very glad every fool knows that too," said Womba, "and pork, I think, is good Norman-French; and so when the brute lives, and is in the charge of a Saxon slave, she goes by her Saxon name; but becomes a Norman, and is called pork, when she is carried to the Castle-hall to feast among the nobles; what dost thou think of this, friend Gurth, ha ? "

(W. Scott 1893: 11)

Under such social, cultural and linguistic change, Chaucer wrote his poems successfully in his own mother tongue, English, and his works were read with pleasure both at those times and at present time. A Chaucer's friend, John Gower(1325?-1408), the author of *Confessio Amantis*(*c.* 1390), wrote his works mainly in Latin or in French, both being prevailing languages in the 14th century or languages of well-educated person. Chaucer showed for the first time in the history of English literature that unexpectedly English too could be an excellent language of literature, and he was named the Father of English poetry in after ages:

But the influence he had on the English language seems to have been more a matter of style than substance. He showed that English could be written with an elegance and power that earlier authors had not attained.

(*Riverside* 1987: xxvi)

As was stated above by Norman Davis, quite a few words, phraseology, clichés and idioms that are proper to French were borrowed, or, to say it justly, infiltrated into Chaucer's works. Also L. D. Benson indicates that the plots or the frameworks of stories in Chaucer's poems are very similar to those of European literature, especially of French works, as is always the case with the writers of the whole world including Japan, for example, Kafu Nagai, that is, they tacitly copy the forms, styles and thoughts from great artists of the past.

The Reeve's Tale was probably based directly on a French fabliau, since two surviving fabliaux, both differing versions of the same story, offer a number of close parallels to Chaucer's work.

(*Riverside*: L. D. Benson: 1987: 8)

It may be very important in order to study Chaucer's language to understand his personality or character, what kind of education he had got, especially the extent of his knowledge of Latin and French, namely, how far he was versed with them. In the first place he was an able person in the service of Court under the reign of King Edward III. Chaucer enjoyed the full confidence of the

King on his personality and competence for a task, and in 1377 he was sent abroad by deputy of King (*cf. Riverside*: Crow & Leland 1987: xvii). According to Masui's investigation, his father had sent young Geoffrey to St. Paul's Cathedral's Grammar School, and there he might have learned the classical Latin grammar, the Latin composition and, in particular, rhetoric in Latin (*cf.* Fukuhara-Masui 1962: 72). Furthermore Ikegami says that "at those times the English nobles generally attached much importance both to Latin and French, even if they can speak English, their mother tongue." (*cf.* Ikegami 1991: 120-121). So it may justly be said that Chaucer had an abundant knowledge in the grammar and construction of both Latin and French, which fact will be clear from the two supporting evidence by Crow & Leland as follows:

> In addition he was translating the *Consolation of Philosophy* of Boethius from the Latin. It has been observed that Chaucer was most prolific as a writer when he was apparently most busy with other affairs. (*Riverside* 1987: xvii)

> Though France at that time was preparing to invade England, Chaucer's friend, Sir Lewis Clifford, returned from France bringing Chaucer a poem of generous praise, written by the leading French poet of the time, Eustache Deschamps. Deschamps's ballade, with the refrain "great translator, noble Geoffrey Chaucer," stressed Chaucer's role as a cultural intermediary who had made *Le roman de la rose* accessible to English readers. (*Riverside* 1987: xix)

The two citations will well illustrate Chaucer's ability for a perfect command of Latin and French and moreover, he was very rich in literary ideas and had gifted sense as a poet. Although he wrote the poems and proses in English, many French words, idiomatic phrases of French, quotations from Latin sentences, especially from the Bible and from philosophers of Greek and Rome are full to the brim. As is described in *The Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer himself had once made a pilgrimage for several days from London to Canterbury Cathedral in Kent to pray to the Archbishop of Canterbury for his wife's recovery from illness:

> The composition of the *General Prologue* to the tales is commonly associated with 1387. It has even been assumed that Chaucer himself took part in a pilgrimage in April of that year, perhaps because of the illness of his wife Philippa, who probably died a few months later.
>
> (Robinson 1957: 1)

An enthusiastic student of Chaucer, Seya (2001: 251-3), stresses an enormous influence of a

French poet, Guillaume de Lorris (1200?-40), on Chaucer. According to his bibliography he quotes publications written in English, French, German and Japanese, and refers to Ovid, an author of *Ars Amatoria* and *Metamorphoses*. Thus Chaucer inherited the traditional and idealistic forms of courtly love from the Part I of *Le Roman de la Rose*, an allegorical story by Guillaume de Lorris, and it was Chaucer himself that for the first time introduced the French romances into English literature. Geoffrey was born in 1340 as a son of rich wine merchant of middle class. His father, John, hoped for his son to rise in the world in the future, and through the aid of his friend in Court he made him enter into the service of Court of Henry III, the most renowned, peerless, gorgeous Court in Europe at those times, as page. While Chaucer was in the service as page or attendant at Court, what lady attendants or court ladies read with much delight was the 13th century romance, *Le Roman de la Rose* by Guillaume de Lorris. So it is the best conceivable that Chaucer, who was well acquainted with French, was absorbed in reading this French poem at Court. Also Seya indicates the influence of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* on Chaucer's 'The Book of The Duchess.'

F. N. Robinson denotes that Chaucer would have written *The Canterbury Tales* in around 1387, after three hundred and twenty one years since the Norman Conquest. Here we should again consider the status of French against English at those times. Owing to the conquest of England by the Normans all the leading, political, cultural and military positions in England as well as those in Court were occupied by the nobility that came over the sea. Consequently French was the current language among the upper classes and at the same time became an official language in England (*cf.* Fukuhara-Ueno 1962: 238-9). The English spellings, consequently pronunciation, in Chaucer's works considerably differed from those of Modern English. Also in his works many French words or expressions are plentifully found as is pointed out by Norman Davis as follows:

> A fully coherent and uniform system of spelling had not yet been developed—the pre-Conquest system, itself not completely consistent, had been much modified by French conventions. (*Riverside* 1987: xxvi)

And this French, as Skeat says, was a kind of dialect usually called Anglo-French. He explains the difference between Anglo-French and that of Paris as follows:

> Anglo-French is the dialect, or the language ··· which was introduced into England in 1066, and was there developed, *in a manner that was largely, but not altogether, independent of foreign influence*, so that in the course of a century or two, it varied more or less from *every* form of French as spoken in France, inclusive even of the dialect of Normandy with which it

had, at the outset, coincided. (Skeat 1891: 2nd Series: 5)

As is always the case with the eminent poets or writers, they are always affected by the good works of the inside and outside of the country. And the the themes, plots, constitutions, forms, rhythms, styles and rhetoric of them might naturally be introduced into his own works. Chaucer's works were not an exceptional case at this point, that is, the French literature had exercised considerable influence on Chaucer's works, as Larry D. Benson remarks about 'The Nun's Priest's Tale' as follows:

> This tale belongs to the genre of *beast fable*, handed down from Aesop (the medieval Isopet) and popular throughout the Middle Ages. The story that Chaucer uses is found in brief fables, such as Marie de France's version, and in the beast-epic the *Roman de Renart*, a thirteenth-century French work ···· (*Riverside* 1987: 18)

As is generally known, the difference between Anglo-Saxon literature and Middle English literature lies in the fact that the former has no overwhelming influence of French literature (*cf.* Fukuhara-Toyama 1962: 38).

As a matter of fact the infiltration of classical Latin, its culture and literature into English society was very powerful as well as into other European countries. For instance Toyama points out a noteworthy fact about lyric poetry that a seemingly fresh poetry of England was in reality an elaborate imitation of Latin poems that were already present in the Continent. For example, apparently the first original English lyric, 'The Cuckoo Song' (*c.*1240), that has an air of Provençal poems was in fact, contrarily to the naïve appearance, a poem with Latin hymn (*cf.* Fukuhara-Toyama 1962: 41). Also Kuriyagawa remarks the important position of Latin as a language of Church and learning during Old English ages. He says it is clear that the author of *Beowulf* was a learned man. He might have been educated at a religious house where he had read the Psalms and other passages of *The New Testament* in Latin every day and had mastered the authentic interpretation of the Bible from the preachers (*cf.* Fukuhara-Kuriyagawa 1962: 21-22). In considering the language contact in England and the nature of the English language, the following remarks on a dominant position of Latin over French by Skeat will be valuable:

> During the whole of our earlier history until, at least, the Tudor period, our language never ceased to be strongly influenced by Latin, the language of the Church. The familiarity of educated persons with the Vulgate version of the Bible, especially throughout the Psalms and Gospels, needs no comment. Owing to this, it has constantly happened that words *having a*

French form and aspect were really adopted from Latin *directly*, and were then conformed to others of a like character by the operation of analogy. (Skeat 1891: 2nd Series: 149)

As is often pointed out by many students of Chaucer, one of the literary works of the Continent he was fond of reading was *Le Roman de la Rose* (English version: *The Romaunt of the Rose*) composed in the 13th century, part I by Guillaume de Lorris and Part II by Jean de Meun, the original Latin text of which being *Ars Amatoria* (*Art of Love*) by Ovid (*cf.* Fukuhara-Toyama 1962: 40). The 16th and 17th century dramatist, W. Shakespeare (1564-1616), is well known to have acquired Latin and mastered its literature not at a university but at a school, and Kozu points out that he had a common knowledge of Latin, and particularly he is well acquainted with Ovid (43 B. C.-? A. D. 17), and that most of the myths in his works were taken from *Metamorphoses*, but his knowledge of Latin is in reality nothing of a scholar, as was said in memorial poems by Ben Jonson (1572-1637), 'Small Latin and Less Greek.' (*cf.* Fukuhara-Kozu 1962: 221). It is an absolute and accepted fact that this fine work, *Metamorphoses*, was a must book for advanced students or intellectuals of Europe, such as Britain, France and Germany. By this masterpiece of Ovid, many Europeans including Chaucer have mastered when young the art of rhetoric, an indispensable knowledge for a man of letters, but a subject that singularly lacks in Japanese school education. In considering English literature, may it be the works of Chaucer or other modern writers, we must always keep the fact in mind that the soul of Latin literature, the noblest of human achievements, always lies deep in European literature and culture. From this point of view, it is only fair to think that English, French, and German literature that are represented by such prominent authors as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Maupassant, Goethe, Schiller and Hesse are not separated or isolated from each other but are spiritually associated. Especially it is very important to pay attention to the connection between Christianity and Latin that runs consistently through medieval English literature. Saito remarks that it comes as a surprise to learn that many priests, needless to say, common believers, too, couldn't understand Latin at all ··· so, for the priests and nuns who have no groundings in Latin, the interpretative books written in their mother tongue were absolutely necessary for preaching the creed of Christianity (*cf.* Ikegami-Saito 1984: 9-10). To tell the truth, the intermediate Latin grammar, such as gerundium, deponentia and supinum, will be very difficult to master, and as to the conjugation and tense system of Latin such as present, imperfect, future, and perfect for each indicative and subjunctive mood including a technique of infixing, are very complicated, that is, altogether a different grammatical system compared to that of English or German.

There are some indications that Chaucer had got a literary hint from *Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-75), an Italian writer, or from *The Thousand and One Nights* or he had copied

them (*cf.* Robinson 1957: 1), or he had been fond of reading Spanish literature, or *The Canterbury Tales* has a great resemblance to the works of Boccaccio:

> ··· The discovery that Chaucer visited Spain has led to speculation about his knowledge of Spanish literature and a renewal of interest in Juan Ruiz's *Libro del buen amor*, the resemblance of which to the Tales has long been known. The parallel that has most interested scholars is offered by Boccaccio's *Decameron*. *The Tales of Canterbury* does resemble collections of novelle such as Boccaccio's ···· (*Riverside*: L. D. Benson 1987: 795)

Larry D. Benson says that *The Canterbury Tales* was an unfinished work and would have to be further revised and elaborated:

> For reasons unknown, Chaucer left *The Canterbury Tales* incomplete and without final revision. The work survives in ten fragments, labeled with Roman numerals in this edition ···· (*Riverside* 1987: 5)

Unlike good quality of poems so far, the vulgar and shameful themes or characters that the modern readers will surely blush and be quite baffled often appear in *The Canterbury Tales*. For instance, try to read 'The Miller's Tale' and consider the literary merit of it. L. D. Benson says that this tale belongs to the low kind of entertainment. Reciting such a poem in Court will surely be a disgrace. The nobility will not listen to such a low-grade work and will not try to circulate such a displeasing, indecent manuscript:

> And they are an unlikely set of pilgrims, including not only those, like the Monk, who probably should not have been on a pilgrimage, but a good many rascals who probably would not have wanted to be on such a journey. Chaucer, in short, does not describe a real pilgrimage ···· (*Riverside* 1987: 4)

Many dirty, blue and obscene presentations are found in his works, the scenes that are not adequate to read aloud before others and therefore have no literary value at all, but are surely the usages of the 14th century English:

(a) And prively he caughte hire by the *queynte*, (Miller 69: 3276)

(b) This Nicholas anon leet fle a *fart*
As greet as it had been a *thonder-dent*,

That with the strook he was almoost yblent; (Reeve 76: 3806-8)

(c) With *buttokes* brode and brestes rounde and hye. (Reeve 79: 3975)

In the 14th century two patterns of verse form were present, the one is an alliterative verse, a Germanic versification that has been applied since Old English ages, the lines not rhyming with each other, the other is an imitative verse form of French and Latin that appeared during the 12th century England, the type of *The Canterbury Tales* being of course the latter (*cf. Riverside* 1987: xxxviii-xxxix). Exactly speaking the versification of Chaucer is an iambic decasyllable couplet. According to *OED, iambic* equals to *iambus* meaning a metrical foot consisting of a short followed by a long syllable, and in accentual verse, of an unaccented followed by an accented syllable, a basic feature of Latin poems. Masui says that court ladies liked French poems by such poets as Guillaume de Machaut (1300?-77) or by Guillaume de Lorris (1200?-40), and that for the courtiers, especially court ladies, to listen to the poems that initiate into the dream of love or fineness of love was in a way their favorite pastime at those times. Thus all the Chaucer's poems were premised on being read aloud before a small attendance, and that they were esteemed as extremely intellectual, delicate and sophisticated ones (Fukuhara-Masui 1962: 74).

In studying the language of Chaucer, major obstacles that lie ahead is the problems of manuscript. Today more than ninety manuscripts are found and each of these may slightly be different from the original. The manuscripts of Chaucer had been copied by the scribes between 15th and 16th century. Many students of Chaucer say that the language of manuscripts is not the same with the original. In the medieval ages when handwriting manuscripts it was very scarce that the scribes copy the manuscript precisely and literally to the original. When words or usages of the original differ from those of the scribes, they will freely change the words, spellings or expressions as they please. In the medieval age it was rather rare for the scribes to pay high regard to the original, and furthermore, the author's name was not written down to most of the works and therefore were anonymous (*cf.* Ono 1981: 152). In deciphering an old, stained manuscript there arise the problems of the so-called ghost words. Apart from the problems of misreading of the original and a slip of the pen by the copyist, difficult questions about the manuscript will come up such as an error in writing or writing amiss by scribes, any loss in the manuscript itself, that is, change of color of the ink, fading, coming off the letters, a stain on the paper that seems as if it were a real letter, the slow oxidation and deterioration of the paper that finally make it difficult to decipher letters (*cf.* Ikegami-Kubo'uchi 1993: 27). For example, *sterres* (*Riverside* 1987: 52: 2037) was in other texts written such as *sertres* or *certres*. Such different variants will offer obstacles in the study of the language of ME :

There remain, however, a few passages in which it is hard not to follow the Harleian text. In *KnT*, I, 2037, where all the printed manuscripts have the obvious blunder *sertres, certres* (or a variant thereof), the Harleian reads correctly *sterres*, which all editors adopt (except Koch, who emends to *cercles*). (Robinson 1957: xxxviii)

However Robinson strongly criticizes the text by Reverend W. W. Skeat, although the present writer likes the latter's writings very much:

Skeat's general policy was to normalize both the spelling and the grammar of his texts, though he was not quite thorough or consistent in removing erroneous forms. The Globe editors differed one from another in their practice, but many incorrect endings were allowed to stand in their text. (Robinson 1957: xli)

well*e* (Pardoner 194: 353)	wist*e* (Pardoner 195: 370)
swell*e* (Pardoner 194: 354)	nekk*e* (Pardoner 195: 395)
tell*e* (Pardoner 195: 360)	bisyness*e* (Pardoner 195: 399)

But the French and French scribes know definitely that this unaccented final *-e* is not pronounced as the following ordinary French words:

tranquill*e*	ombr*e* (f.)
mèr*e* (f.)	histoir*e* (f.)

As follows Robinson discusses the problem of many final *-e* in Chaucer's works. In studying ME literature a profound, accurate, not superficial, knowledge of French, Latin and German grammar is indispensable. Many stress the importance of French grammar, but few, except the present author, would not pay attention to German grammar, of course, the frame of OE, ME and Mod E.:

In this edition the practice is again not wholly consistent, but in most cases the *-e*'s have been struck off and the correct historical forms restored. One other form, of frequent occurrence, may be cited to illustrate this editorial problem. The possessive pronoun *his*, when used with a plural noun, frequently takes a final *-e* (*hise*) in the best manuscripts. This is very common, almost regular, with the Ellesmere scribe. But the *-e* is not justified by the Anglo-Saxon form (*his*) and appears never, or almost never, to be pronounced in Chaucer's verse. It has been

struck off in the present edition. (Robinson 1957: xlii)

So far there are three main texts published on Chaucer's works, that is, by Skeat (1912), Robinson (1957) and Benson (3rd ed., 1987) respectively, and Benson's text, *The Riverside Chaucer*, is the newest. In this text more than 160 errors in Robinson's were amended:

> The text presented here is in effect, therefore, a revision of Robinson's work, with errors corrected and relatively few new readings introduced. The appearance of Manly and Rickert's edition, which provided the full collations that he had lacked in editing the text for the 1933 edition, induced Robinson to reconsider his text of the *Tales*; his 1957 edition contained over 160 changed readings. (*Riverside*: L. D. Benson: 1987: xli)

Norman Davis openly denounces the scribes' misspelling. That is, they often do not coincide with the pronunciation that is clear from the rhyme of the couplet:

> Scribes varied in writing words in which *o* precedes the back fricative consonant usually written *gh*. The commonest spelling is probably *ou*, but simple *o* is favored by some, so that modern *thought* may be written *thought(e)*, *thowght(e)*, or *thoght(e)*. Scribes did not always match spellings exactly to pronunciation as evidenced by rhyme. (*Riverside* 1987: xxix)

The following by Robinson will give plain indications of the scribes' arbitrariness in copying the manuscript, that is, their works are frequently inconsistent with the original:

> In the *Canterbury Tales*, although there are numerous cases of correction, cancellation, or rearrangement, there is no thoroughgoing and systematic revision ··· The ordinary critical method fails entirely at this point, since the scribes modified spelling rather freely in copying.
> (Robinson 1957: xl & xliii)

At present, though there exist many, diverse manuscripts of Chaucer, the Ellesmere copy is the most authentic as both Robinson and Benson remark:

> In mere matters of orthography, when verbal variants are not involved, the Ellesmere copy has been followed, as representing a good scribal tradition. But throughout all Chaucer's works, as explained below, the spellings of the manuscripts have been corrected for grammatical accu-

racy and for the adjustment of rimes. (Robinson 1957: xxxix)

Quite a unique question arises as to the reliability of the manuscripts in *The Riverside Chaucer*. L. D. Benson says that there may be some clever imitations in this edition and that by comparing phonology, accidence and syntax of Chaucer's works with the doubtful manuscripts we can judge the authenticity of them:

> Some works in this volume are clearly not by Chaucer, including most of the Supplementary Propositions of the *Astrolabe*. They are printed here because some may indeed be Chaucer's and because they illustrate certain passages in the authentic works. The "B" Fragment of *The Romaunt of the Rose* is also clearly not Chaucer's; ··· R. M. Wilson's careful study of the language ··· showed that the phonology, morphology, and syntax of the *Equatorie* were consistent with Chaucer's own usage. (*Riverside* 1987: xxii-xxiii)

But A. Burgess' words are on the cover of *The Riverside Chaucer* that, "This is the best edition of Chaucer in existence," and we have no choice left but to accept the emendation of this edition as best at present.

So far we have discussed the backgrounds on ME literature, especially on *The Canterbury Tales*, on the Norman Conquest and Guerre de Cent Ans, that is, on the influence of French literature and its versification on Chaucer's works and on problems for solution about medieval manuscripts. The important thing to consider in the study of Chaucer's language is whether the English of the manuscripts is really the language of that age or not. A few students conclude that they will not be the language of Chaucer itself, which remark means that making an elucidation of the actual condition of English from the studies of *The Canterbury Tales* will be particularly difficult (*cf.* Ono 1981: 152). But at present there is nothing left for it but to study Chaucer based on the most authentic publication, *The Riverside Chaucer*. The works of Chaucer mainly cited in this paper, in order to investigate the degree of influence of languages of the Continent on Chaucer's works, is the following five tales arbitrarily extracted from *The Canterbury Tales* : 'General Prologue,' 'The Miller's Prologue and Tale,' 'The Reeve's Prologue and Tale,' 'The Pardoner's Introduction, Prologue, and Tale,' 'The Nun's Priest's Prologue, Tale, and Epilogue', etc.

First of all it comes as a surprise to learn that there are so many idiomatic or set phrases of French in his works. The following *par cas* means *by chance* in English, exactly similar to French set phrases such as *au cas par cas* (case by case), *en tous cas* (in every case). By the rhyming of the couplet it is clear that *-s* in *cas*, etc., was pronounced unlike modern French:

(a) And with that word it happed hym, *par cas*,
To take the botel ther the poyson was, (Pardoner 201: 885-6)

(b) Now, sire, and eft, sire, so bifel the *cas*
That on a day this hende Nicholas (Miller 69: 3271-2)

(c) And axed upon *cas* a cloisterer (Miller 74: 3661)

(d) That is to seyn, that telleth in this *caas*
Tales of best sentence and moost solaas— (General P 36: 797-8)

A French preposition *à* (= to, at, in) frequently appears as *a* in Chaucer's English.

(a) He seyde, "Syn I shal bigynne the game,
What, welcome be the cut, *a* Goddes name! (General P 36: 853-4)
(= in God's name)

(b) And whoso fyndeth hym out of swich blame,
He wol come up and offre *a* Goddes name, (Pardoner 195: 385-6)

(c) As I have looked in the moone bright,
That now *a* Monday next, at quarter nyght, (Miller 72: 3515-6)
(= on next Monday)

Note also the following French idiomatic phrase, *par compaignye* (alike to Mod F: de compagnie, avec compagnie). Thus French expressions and words are found everywhere in his poems.

(a) To sitten in the roof, *par compaignye*.
The folk gan laughen at his fantasye; (Miller 77: 3839-40)
(= for fellowship's sake; to keep him company)

(b) As for that nyght, departen *compaignye*;
And ech of hem gooth to his *hostelrye*, (Nun's 255: 2993-4)

The two words marked in (b) are French spelling and pronunciation, *h-* in the beginning of a word being of course a mute. Jespersen says that Chaucer used so many French words and expressions, giving many favors to French. This might be due to the social conditions at those times and also to the French scribes' conventions:

Chaucer undoubtedly employs a far greater number of French words than most other writers

of his time. Nor would it be fair to ascribe all these borrowings to what I have mentioned as snobbism; the greater a writer's familiarity with French culture and literature, the greater would be his temptation to introduce French words for everything above the commonplaces of daily life. (Jespersen 1938: 86: § 94)

The following are French expressions themselves:

(a) Of yeddynges he baar outrely the pris.
His nekke whit was as the flour-de-lys; (General P 27: 237-8)
(Mod F: fleur de lis)

(b) To riden out, he loved *chivalrie*,
Trouthe and *honour*, fredom and *curteisie*. (General P 24: 45-6)
(Mod F: chevalerie, honneur, courtoisie, respectively.)

(c) Thurgh fantasie that of his *vanytee*,
He hadde yboght hym knedyng tubbes thre, (Miller 77: 3835-6)
(Mod F: vanité)

(d) In this *viage* shal telle tales tweye (General P 36: 792)
(Mod F: voyage)

(e) But al with *riche* and selleres of vitaille. (General P 27: 248)
(equals to Mod F, riche)

(f) To han housbondes *hardy*, wise, and free, (Nun's 254: 2914)
(Mod F: hardi [ardi], the adjectives are often placed after the noun they modify as in French, frequently to rhyme the lines.)

(g) Whan humours been to *habundant* in a wight. (Nun's 254: 2925)
(Mod F: abondant) (*OED*: <Old French: *c.* 1450 habundante, 1509 haboundant, 1611 abundant.)

(h) 'And, sires, also it heeleth *jalousie*; (Pardoner 195: 366)
(equals to Mod French)

(i) For though a man be falle in jalous rage,
Lat maken with this water his *potage*, (Pardoner 195: 367-8)
(equals to Mod French)

(j) Henne over a mile, withinne a greet *village*,
Bothe man and womman, child, and hyne, and *page*;
I trowe his *habitacioun* be there. (Pardoner 199: 687-9)

(Mod F: village, page, habitation. Here three words are used exactly the same with Mod French pronunciation.)

(k) For whan I dar noon oother weyes *debate*,
Thanne wol I stynge hym with my tonge smerte (Pardoner 195: 412-3)
(Mod F: débattre)

(l) So muchel of daliaunce and fair *langage*.
He hadde maad ful many a *mariage* (General P 26: 211-2)
(Both are exactly the same with Mod F.)

(m) And I assoille him by the *auctoritee*
Which that by bulle *y*graunted was to me.' (Pardoner 195: 387-8)
(Mod F: autorité. *OED*: 12-16th c. auctorité. *y-* is the sign of past participle like *ge-* in German.)

(n) Ne of his speche *daungerous* ne digne, (General P 31: 517)
(Mod F: dangereux, se.)

(o) But sooth to seyn, he was somdeel squaymous
Of fartyng, and of speche *daungerous*. (Miller 70: 3337-8)
(From the rhyme of the couplet, *-s* at the end of the word might be pronounced alike to modern English.) (Mod F: dangereux, se. *-x* is a mute.)

(p) Certes, swich cry ne *lamentacion*
Was nevere of ladyes maad whan Ylion (Nun's 260: 3355-6)
(Mod F: lamentation. f.)

(q) Thus *roial*, as a prince is in his halle, (Nun's 258: 3184)
(Mod F: royal. In English this is used in the meaning of 'stately'.)

The following quotation includes one abstract French noun in each line and, as is fairly clear from the spelling and the sound of the couplet, the pronunciation was just the same with modern French. Like the above, we are very astonished to know that he had used too many French words. The French suffix *-tion* (*-ation*, *-ion*, *-ition*, *-sion*, *-ssion*, *-xion*) is a noun formative that denotes the result of action.

(a) Lo, which a greet thyng is *affeccioun*!
Men may dyen of *ymaginacioun*,
So depe may *impressioun* be take. (Miller 73: 3611-3)
(Mod F: affection, imagination, impression, respectively.)

(b) For certes, many a *predicacioun*
Comth ofte tyme of yvel *entencioun*; (Pardoner 195: 407-8)
(Mod F: prédication, intention.)

In modern French both *-ment* and *-ement* are formative of adverb or noun, but in Chaucer they are used only as noun formative and the *-t* at the end was pronounced unlike modern French as is clear from the couplet:

And if yow liketh alle by oon assent
For to stonden at my *juggement*, (General P 35: 777-8)
(Mod F: jugement. m.)

The French suffix *-able*, when agglutinated to a verb or a noun, alters the word into adjectives denoting probability or quality.

(a) Mordre is so wlatsom and *abhomynable*
To God, that is so just and *resonable*, (Nun's 256: 3053-4)
(Mod F: abominable, raisonnable.)
(b) Of his diete *mesurable* was he,
For it was of no *superfluitee*,
But of greet norissyng and *digestible*. (General P 30: 435-7)
(The three words are about the same with Mod French)

The French suffix *-esse* added to adjectives changes them into noun denoting quality or state such as *tristesse*, *gentillesse* and *vieillesse*.

My lord youre fader—God his soule blesse! —
And eek youre mooder, of hire *gentillesse*, (Nun's 259: 3295-6)

The suffix *-ship* is a formative of abstract noun. According to *OED* it is *-sciepe* in OE, and etymologically an Old Frisian. The *-ship* as in *busyship* turned into *-esse* in the 14th century. *OED* denotes that 'busyship' became an obsolete in around 14th century. *MED* denotes both forms, 'bisishipe' (= effort) and 'bisinesse' (being busy), that had been current in *c.* 1230. But, in reality, this *-ship* is *-schaft* in German as die *Freundschaft*.

To drawen folk to hevene by fairnesse,
By good ensample, this was his *bisynesse*. (General P 31: 519-520)

A French noun *doute* was still used as it is in Chaucer without *-b-* in it.

Greet sokene hath this millere, out of *doute*,
With whete and malt of al the land aboute; (Reeve 79:3987-8)

Out of doute might be an English translation of *hors de doute* (= without doubt) or *Il est hors de doute que* ··· (It is no doubt that ···).

Thy wyf shal I wel saven, *out of doute*.
Go now thy wey, and speed thee heer-aboute. (Miller 73: 3561-2)

This idiomatic phrase, *out of doute*, repeatedly appears in the works and might approximately mean *surely* or *doubtless*. As might naturally be expected, *hors de doute* was not used, instead *douteles* first appeared in English in *c.* 1340 (*cf. OED*).

(a) To sleen the Baptist John, ful giltelees.
Senec seith a good word *doutelees*; (Pardoner 196; 491-2)
(b) This caused me my gronyng, *doutelees*."
"Avoy! " quod she, "fy on yow, hertelees! (Nun's 254: 2907-8)
(c) This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette:
Ther wiste no wight that he *was in dette*, (General P 28: 279-280)

Dette in (c) is exactly the same with modern French, *was in dette* (= be in debt) being equals to French, *être en dette avec* ···· Thus semantically English phrase runs closely parallel to that of French, as is often the case with European languages.

In honour *dettelees* (but if he were wood), (General P 32: 582)
(= without debts. *cf. Riverside*, footnote. p. 32)

Ensample (= Mod F: exemple. m.) is a form of Anglo-French, Old French being *essample* (*cf. OED*), but as in the following, *exemple* is also used in parallel with *ensample*.

(a) And therfore, faire Pertelote so deere,
By swiche *ensamples* olde maistow leere (Nun's 257: 3105-6)

(b) A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a temple,
Of which *achatours* myghte take *exemple*
For to be wise in *byynge* of vitaille; (General P 32: 567-9)

To take an example is *prendre···pour exemple* in French. Here English phrase semantically goes side by side with French. *Achatour* (= acheteur) is a genuine French derived from verb, *acheter* (= buy), *byynge* being semantically the same.

Leve I this *Chauntecleer* in his pasture,
And after wol I telle his *aventure*. (Nun's 258: 3185-6)

Aventure (= adventure) is the form of modern French. *Adventure* was borrowed from Old French, and during 13-16th century the form was *aventure* and in 15th century *adventure* with *-d-* first appeared (*cf. OED*). German das *Abenteuer* is more similar to French than English.

In addition to the verb, *sing* (German: singen), the French, *chanter*, often appears in the works:

(a) Therwith ye han in musyk moore feelynge
Than hadde Boece, or any that kan *synge*. (Nun's 259: 3293-4)

(b) Into the yerd ther *Chauntecleer* the faire (Nun's 258: 3219)

Chauntecleer is a compound word of French, *chanter* (sing) and *clair* (clear), and is the name of a cock that is threatened with being attacked by a fox.

Whan they had seyn of *Chauntecleer* the sighte. (Nun's 260: 3361)

The following place name in Bretagne, *Fynystere*, is also a French compound of *finir* (= finish), and *terre* (= earth), meaning 'the end of earth'. *K* in *knew* in the first line below was prnounced clearly, although a mute in Modern English. This mute might have come from the conventions of French pronunciation. In *Nouveau Petit Royal Dictionnaire Français-Japonais* (pp. 795-6), the number of the words that begins with *k* is only 106. The French will not welcome the word beginning with *k-*.

He *knew* alle the havenes, as they were,
Fro Gootlond to the cape of *Fynystere*, (General P 30: 407-8)

The French words, *centre*, *théâtre*, *propre* (= proper) and *ministre*, all end in *-re* instead of *-er* and unaccented *-e* at the end is a mute. An ordinary English word such as *shoulder* was forcibly spelt as *-re* by scribes, which will be a reflex of common knowledge of the upper classes, that is, of the Normans. *Shoulder* was spelt as *sculdor* in OE (German: die *Schulter*) and also as *schuldur*, *-dyr* during 14-15th century (*cf. OED*).

(a) And therwith he his *shuldres* overspradde; (General P 34: 678)
(Mod F: épaule. f.)
(b) Thanne have I in latoun a *sholder-* boon (Pardoner 194: 350)
(c) The REVE was a *sclendre* colerik man. (General P 32: 587)
(Mod E: slender)
(d) She was so *propre* and sweete and likerous. (Miller 70: 3345)
(= proper)

In French and German a succession of vowels is particularly undesirable because of hardship of articulation. In French, *le ami* and *la école* are written and pronounced as *l'ami* and *l'école* respectively. *De quoi parle il?* is pronounced like *De quoi parle-t-il?* with *t* between the vowels. Also in German *da auf*, *hätte ich*, *würde ich* and *ziehe ich* are written and articulated as *darauf*, *hätt ich*, *würd ich* and *zieh ich* respectively, particularly *e* may freely be dropped in German. This economy of language, that is, sandhi or liaison, is the same with English. In the following, to avoid the succession of vowels such as *ee* or *ea*, scribes added an apostrophe deleting one vowel:

(a) *Th'estaat*, *th'array*, the nombre, and eek the cause (General P 34: 716)
(b) Sownynge alwey *th'encrees* of his wynnyng. (General P 27: 275)

From the rhyme of the couplet, the following *table* was pronounced as [tabl] just the same with French. *At the table* is the same with a French set phrase, *à table* (= Dinner is ready).

Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,
And carf biforn his fader at the *table*. (General P 25: 99-100)

Unlike English and German, the consonant *h* at the head is a mute in French, and in Latin a very weak sound as *h-* in *herba*. For instance, the *h* in *hier*, *hardi* [ardi], *haut* [o], *héros* [ero], and *histoire* is mute. So *Huberd*, a Catholic saint, in the following couplet is pronounced as [yberd], but actually [yber] in French (*cf.* Suzuki 1996: 1931).

(a) This worthy lymytour was cleped *Huberd*.
A MARCHANT was ther with a forked berd, (General P 27:269-270)

(b) And with an *hardy* herte he gan to crye (Nun's 256: 3039)

The following *Symond* (Mod F: Simon) is also a name of a Catholic saint, the *-d* in the end being of course a mute:

"Symond," quod John, "by God, nede has na peer. (Reeve 80: 4026)

The *-x* in French plurals of noun, *châteaux*, *oiseaux* and *journaux*, and of adjective, *beaux*, *matinaux* and *nouveaux* are of course all mute, the same is true with Chaucer's works, so that the *-x* in the following *mortreux* is a mute and is completely a French word-formation:

Maken *mortreux*, and wel bake a pye. (General P 29: 384)

In Modern French, *- il(l)* at the end of a word is a *l* mouillée, not a clear *l*, like the words such as *soleil*, *travailler*, *fille*, and *famille*. But in Chaucer's works, what a wonder, this *-l* is a clear *l*, not a *l* mouillée as is clear from the following couplets. This was what a great lexicographer of France, Émile Littré (1801-81), had once advocated. The mass of the people of France, however, had already abandoned the habit of pronouncing this *l* since 17th century (*cf.* Yamada 1994: 184). The *riche* [riʃ] in (c) is also French.

(a) If thilke day he wente into *bataille*.
She warned hym, but it myghte nat *availle*; (Nun's 257: 3145-6)

(b) For to be wise in byynge of *vitaille*;
For wheither that he payde or took by *taille*, (General P 32: 569-70)

(c) For to deelen with no swich *poraille*,
But al with *riche* and selleres of *vitaille*. (General P 27: 247-8)

The *travaille* (mental anguish) (Mod F: travail) in the following is a genuine French both in meaning and in spelling, not in the least an English word. Thus far too many French words were used to excess.

> For *travaille* of his goost he groneth soore, (Miller 74: 3646)

In Chaucer's works, like Latin and French, the determinative adjectives come either before or after the noun they qualify. When two or three adjectives qualify a noun, it is possible to place adjectives concurrently both before and after the noun they modify. In Latin there is the strictest concordance of gender, number and case between noun and determinative adjective, and also between subject and complemental adjective, so that it is absolutely impossible to find instances of adjectives modifying an irrelevant, another noun of gender, number and case.

> *bona* puella (a good girl)
> poeta *clarus* (a famous poet)
> naves *longae* (long ships, warships)
> specie et motu *ingentium maris fluctuum* (sight and motion of ocean's huge waves)

Also in German there is a strict concordance with gender, number and case among the noun, determinative adjective and article. Such a feature as is present in Latin, French and German is also observable in Chaucer's language, which fact being deliberately pointed out by N. Davis as follows. But the present author, unlike Norman Davis, considers linguistically the "oure aller cost" below as the adjective declension of German grammar.

> A few plural adjectives, of French origin, have the French ending *-s*: two are in verse, *places delitables*, *romances that been roiales*, and a number in prose, such as *houres inequales*. A rare survival of a genitive plural ending is *-er* in *aller* in phrases such as *oure aller cost*; it also functions as an intensive of the superlative in the form *alder-* as in *alderbest*, and in *bother*.
>
> (*Riverside* 1987: xxxi)

In French there is a concordance by gender (only two genders, masculine and feminine) and number, but not by case, between noun and determinative adjectives as follows:

gender	singular	plural
masculine	un chat noir	des chats noirs
feminine	une chatte noire	des chattes noires

Indeed we couldn't disguise our surprise to learn that the following (a) and (b) are written under the complete French grammar, although *-s* in (b) might have been pronounced unlike French. Then, whose language is this? Is it by Chaucer or by French scribes, or was it a must to write works conforming to French grammar in order to receive much recognition from courtiers or the Normans? (A) is an example of postpositive adjective with an agreement with number between noun and adjective. In (b) one plural adjective, *roiales* (royal), modifies three plural nouns.

(a) And eek in othere places *delitables*;
They dauncen and they pleyen at ches and tables. (The Franklin's Tale 180: 899-900)

(b) Of romances that been *roiales*,
Of popes and of cardinales, (Sir Thopas 215: 848-9)

As aforesaid, in French adjectives come either before or after the noun they qualify, prepositive ones generally laying emphasis on the meaning of noun, although there are many exceptions to this rule:

(a) un homme *grand* (a tall man)
(b) un *grand* homme (a great man)
(c) le *Petit* Caporal (Napoleon)
(d) C'est un homme tout *petit*. (It is a very small man.)

The same is true with Old English:

eal þes middangeard (this entire world)
Denum *eallum* (to all the Danes)
micle meras *fersce* (big fresh-water meres) (Barber 1993: 120)

In Chaucer's works some grammatical frameworks of German are actually observed, but few linguists would not point out them except the present author. In German the determinative adjectives always come before a noun they qualify except in poems in order to rhyme the lines. Some adjec-

tives like (b) below have the same inflectional endings as German adjectives:

(a) *guter roter* Wein (good, red wine)
ein *regnerischer, stürmischer* Tag (a rainy, stormy day)

(b) Shal have a soper at oure *aller* cost
Heere in this place, sittynge by this post, (General P 36: 799-800)

In German, *all* fully inflects according to gender, case and number as follows:

masculine (nominative): aller
feminine (nominative): alle
neuter (nominative): alles
plural (nominative): alle
(*cf. Aller* Anfang ist schwer = All the beginning is hard.)

Then in Chaucer's works, there are many points at which the usages of determinative adjectives meet on common ground with those of Latin, French and Old English. To read the sentences, (a) (b) (c) below, is just like reading modern French concerning the position of adjectives that swarm about one noun they modify.

(a) Thanne were ther *yonge povre* scolers *two*, (Reeve 79: 4002)

(b) With kamus nose and eyen *greye as glas*,
With buttokes *brode* and brestes *rounde* and *hye*. (Reeve 79: 3974-3975)

(c) Yet in *oure* asshen *olde* is fyr yreke. (Reeve 77: 3882)

The followings are the examples of postpositive adjectives, both *robe* and *riche* (should be written as *riches*) in (a) being genuine French:

(a) Than *robes riche*, or fithele, or gay sautrie. (General P 28: 296)

(b) As I have looked in the moone *bright*, (Miller 72: 3515)
(the bright moon)

(c) He was a lord *ful fat* and in good poynt; (General P 26: 200)
(a full fat lord)

(d) But by necessitee *condicioneel*. (Nun's 259: 3250)
(= inferential necessity)

(e) Ful festisly ydight with herbes *swoote*; (Miller 68: 3205)
(sweet herbs)

(f) In houres by his magyk *natureel.* (General P 30: 416)

(q) His Almageste, and bookes *grete* and *smale*, (Miller 68: 3208)
(= great and small books)

(h) In *alle* the ordres *foure* is noon that kan (General P 26: 210)
(= all the four Orders)

(i) That in the grove hadde woned yeres *three*, (Nun's 258: 3216)
(= three years)

(j) As gladly doon *thise* homycides *alle* (Nun's 258: 3224)
(= all these homicides)

The conventional phrases of French such as (d) above came from French, ultimately perhaps from Latin, and are now excessively predominant in modern English. Thus English may be, so to speak, a rising, or provincial, upstart language because it borrows too many important abstract nouns from languages of the Continent.

condition nécessaire
condition nécessaire et suffisante
résultat nécessaire (Modern French)

But at the same time the prepositive adjectives as follows are also used side by side.

Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reed, (General P 28: 294)

A certain word that was used by Chaucer had altogether vanished away both from French and English.

With sheetes and with *chalons* faire yspred (Reeve 81: 4140)
(= blankets)

The *OED* defines *chalon* as a sort of woolen stuff and, what a delight, exactly the same sentence as cited above is quoted, although the word is marked as an obsolete, and both a name of a great lexicographer of France, Émile Littré, and a name of a town of Champagne, Chalon-sur-Saône (Chalon-

upon-the River Saône), are put down there. *Chalon* is *couverture* in modern French, and *blanket* in modern English, the latter originates from Old French, which word-formation being *blanc* (= white) + *ette* (a French feminine diminutive). French word, *blanquette* (f.) (= white wine) also has a transparent meaning.

In Chaucer, as is generally known, *bird* and *ask* appear as *bryd* and *axe* respectively, a kind of sound change called metathesis.

(a) My faire *bryd*, my sweete cynamome? (Miller 75: 3699)
(b) "Spek, sweete *bryd*, I noot nat where thou art." (Miller 76: 3805)
(c) "Go bet," quod he, "and *axe* redily (Pardoner 199: 667)

The *OED* denotes several forms such as *brid* (1-5) [5 points to the 15th century], *bridd* (3-5), *bryd* (3-6), *bridde* (4-5), *byrd* (4-6), and informs us that the etymology is unknown. Also *MED* (Part B. 5: 1161) tells us that "In ME, *brid* predominates until *c.* 1475. *bird* is not attested until 1419 and occurs before 1450 chiefly in Northern MSS, but it must be old ··· prob. akin to OE ge)byrd : birth, offspring." Probably *gebären* (to bear) of German will be cognate with *brid*. As to the change of form of *ask*, *OED* shows the followings: *ásci-an* (1) [1 = before 1100], *axien* (2-3), *æxi* (3). *axe* (4-6) and *ask* (4). An internationally eminent linguist of Germany, Hermann Paul (1846-1921), gives a full account of metathesis as follows (Paul 1995: 64):

··· zwei unmittelbar auf einander folgende Laute werden umgestellt, ····
(= immediately successive, continuous, two sounds are replaced)

English: ásci-an (llc) > ask
French: olvidar > oublier (= forget)
French Dialect: fisque > fixé (= fix), sesque > sexe (= sex)
German: Wefse > die Wespe (= bee)

As everybody knows, when we express a part of a body or clothes, it is the rule to annex a definite article, *the*, to the noun, the same rule is true with both German and French. In German the definite articles such as *der* (masculine, nominative), *die* (f.) and *das* (n.), and in French *le* (m.), *la* (f.) and *les* (pl.) are added to the noun respectively in accordance with the gender, number and case of the noun. Thus naturally a grammatical, semantical parallelism is often found among European languages:

(a) English: I shot a tiger through *the* head.
He kissed her on *the* cheek.
Somebody grabbed him by *the* collar.

(b) German: Ich klopfe ihm auf *die* Schulter.
Sie schlägt ihn *ins* Gesicht. (= in das)
Er küsste ihr *den* Mund.

(c) French: Il alla tout doucement tirer son ami par *la* manche.
Puis il poussa l'enfant dehors par *les* épaules.
Il le saisit à deux mains *aux* cheveux. (= à les)

The usages of the definite article in the 14th century are, of course, the same with the above. The sentence (d) below is extremely a vulgar, indecent representation and we surely shrink from reading it aloud before students.

(a) Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam by *the* berd, (Nun's 260: 3358)

(b) And by *the* throte-bolle he caughte Alayn,
And he hente hym despitously agayn,
And on *the* nose he smoot hym with his fest. (Reeve 83: 4273-5)

(c) And caughte hym by *the* nekke, and softe he spak. (Reeve 83: 4261)

(d) And prively he caughte hire by *the* queynte, (Miller 69: 3276)

As Norman Davis points out, the so-called impersonal constructions are also found abundantly in Chaucer's works. What is worth notice is that some verbs in Chaucer govern the dative case as its object, although such a usage had become extinct in modern English.

> Such so-called impersonal constructions are found with some other modal verbs, as *Us moste, as hire oughte*. They are frequent also with a number of other verbs, sometimes with the subject pronoun *it*, as *Me thynketh it, it reweth me*, and sometimes without, as *if yow liketh, hire liste nat, Hym deigned nat, if that yow remembre*. (*Riverside* 1978: xxxvii)

(a) To looke on hire *hym thoughte* a myrie lyf, (Miller 70: 3344)

(b) *Me thynketh* it acordaunt to resoun (General P 24: 37)
(It seems to me ···, I think it ···,) [*cf.* footnote of *Riverside*]

(c) And of manhod *hym lakkede* right naught, (General P 35: 756)

(d) *Us moste* putte oure good in aventure. (The Canon's Yeoman's 275: 946)
(= We must ···)

However, *think* is also used just the same with modern English, not as a verb of impersonal construction:

"I graunte, ywis," quod he, "but *I moot thynke*
Upon som honest thyng while that I drynke." (Pardoner 194: 327-8)
(= I must think)

In German, as in "*es* regnet" (= it rains), "*es* freut mich" (I am glad···), *es* has no meaning at all, but in "*es* geht in Hause um." (The house is haunted), *es* has a slight meaning of pronoun, the former being an impersonal pronoun, and the latter a personal pronoun representing a certain noun (Sagara 1965: 176-8). The full declension of personal pronoun seems to be more conspicuous in German than in French. In French, except the two dative cases, *lui* and *leur*, both dative and accusative forms are equal, also in German, except *uns* and *euch*, the rest is the same with accusative forms. However verbs in German have a general tendency to strictly govern only dative or accusative case, sometimes genitive like *vergessen*.

French: Il *me semble* impossible de trouver la solution.
Le temps *me manque* pour *m'etendre* sur ce sujet.
Il *lui semble* qu'on pourrait procéder autrement.
German: Es *scheint mir*, dass er lügt. (dative case)
Das *shien mir* nicht der Mühe wert. (dative case)
Ihm fehlt der Mut. (dative case)

It is a matter of common knowledge that the Angles and the Saxons (German: Sachsen) invaded Britain in succession from such country as Germany, Denmark and Netherlands at fifth century, and England was named after the Angles, the conquerors (*cf.* Sheerin 1990: 3). However, strange to say, Jespersen seldom refers to the influence of German on the 14th century English or to remarkably Germanic constructions that are easily found everywhere in Chaucer, instead he lays great emphasis on Latin, French and Scandinavian. Almost all the English words themselves in Chaucer are all cognate with German, so his assertion is a basic error.

There are surprisingly few German loan-words in English, and very little can be inferred from them with regard to cultural relations, apart, perhaps, from some philosophical terms the meaning of which was stamped by Kant and his English followers. (Jespersen 1938: § 157: 143)

According to Norman Davis, the first person, singular pronoun *I* also appears occasionally as *ich* (*cf. Riverside* xxxii). And Fernand Mossé shows the following declensions (Mossé 1952: 54-58):

subjective: ich, ic, ik, I, y
possessive: mīn, mī
objective: mē

Ik is just the same with Gothic, and *ich* with modern German. Chaucer's *ich*, *I*, *ik* have closer relations to the history of German. The declensions of the first person, singular pronoun of Gothic and German are as follows (Sagara 1965: 170)

(Singular)	Gotisch	Althochdeutsch	Neuhochdeutsch
Nominativ	ik	ih, ich	ich
Genitiv	meina	mîn	mein (er)
Dativ	mis	mir	mir
Akkusativ	mik	mih, mich	mich

(a) And seyde, "Ywis, but if *ich* have my wille, (Miller 69: 3277)
(b) And saugh a litel shymeryng of a *light*,
For at an hole in shoon the moone *bright*, (Reeve 83-84: 4297-8)

From the couplet in (b) above, the pronunciation of *light* (German: das Licht) may be [líçt], and also *ich* in (a) may be [íç] like German.

Dear Mother and *dearest mother* are rendered into German as *Liebe Mutter* and *liebste Mutter* respectively. The German expressions of addressing ourselves to a person such as *der liebe Gott*, *meine liebe Mutter* and *lieber Vater* are very common in that language, and have the strictest agreement between adjective and noun concerning gender, number and case. *MED* and a concordance to Chaucer do not give *leeve*, and *OED* just informs us that it is a variant of *leve* and is an obs., and does not tell us that it came from German adjective *lieb*. A footnote of *Riverside* (p. 199) gives *leeve* as *dear*. *My leeve brother* in (b) below is *meine liebe Bruder* in German. Thus English

runs closely parallel to German.

(a) And seyde, "*Leve* brother Osewold, (Miller 67: 3151)
(b) They seyde, "The man is wood, my *leeve* brother"; (Miller 77: 3848)
(c) And seye '*Leeve* mooder, leet me in ! (Pardoner 199: 731)

In Chaucer, Latin *cause* (f.) (= reason) repeatedly appears as a substitute for *because*. *OED* gives the following forms and phrases such as *bycause* (4-7), *by cause* (4-6), *because* (4), *for because that* ··· (*c* 1400), *by cause that* ··· (*c* 1486), and examples of Chaucer are cited. On the other hand French expressions such as *parce que*, *car*, *à cause de* ···, *pour cause de* ··· are not used by Chaucer for some unknwon reasons.

(a) *By cause* that he fer was from hire sight, (Miller 71: 3395)
(b) *By cause* he was of carpenteris craft, (Reeve 77: 3861)

In Chucer's works, quotations from Latin Bible are frequently found, which fact shows that in the 14th century Latin was decidedly superior to English as a language of the Bible and the Church.

Radix malorum est Cupiditas. (Pardoner 194: 334, 195: 426)
(= Greed is the root of [all] evils.) (Timothy 1: 6: 10)

But this quotation must actually be corrected as follows:

··· radix enim omnium malorum est cupiditas, quam quidam appententes erraverunt a fide et inseruerunt se doloribus multis. (AD Timotheum I: 6: 10, p.549.)

English Version: For the love of money is a source of all kinds of evil. Some have been so eager to have it that they have wandered away from the faith and have broken their hearts with many sorrows. (1 Timothy 6: 10)

L. D. Benson picked up an important mistake about the interpretation of the Latin citation in the Bible (*Riverside* 18). What a shame it is that Chaucer himself or many scribes who had copied the texts did not think of the gross misinterpretation for a long time.

For al so siker as *In principio*,
Mulier est hominis confusio ···
Madame, the sentence of this Latyn is,
'Womman is mannes joye and al his blis.' (Nun's 257: 3163-6)

mulier (f.) : woman
est : is
hominis : common gender, genitive case of *homō* (man)
cōnfūsiō (f.) : confusion

So line 3164 is rendered into English as "Woman is man's confusion." *In principio* in line 3163 is a phrase from *Ioannem* (= John I: 1), the meaning of which being *in the beginning*.

It is particularly appropriate to say that Chaucer's works are full of stirring, passionate, and what is more, beautiful rhetoric. The general knowledge of rhetoric in medieval Europe, that is, in Britain, France, Germany and Italy, etc., played an important role as a school education and was indispensable for well-educated persons and for them was a must alongside other subjects such as Latin grammar and logic. Chaucer, not to mention Shakespeare and other great men of letters of Europe, had thoroughly mastered rhetoric in their youth, including of course such outstanding writings as *Rhetoric* by Aristotle (384-322 B.C) and *Metamorphoses* by Ovid (43B.C.-? A.D.17), a poet in ancient Rome. Here we want to compare the impassioned, gorgeous rhetoric of Chaucer with that of Ovid and to show something similar to each other.

The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the *Ram* his half cours yronne, (General P 23: 7-8)

··· as often as spring drives winter out and the *Ram* succeeds the watery Fish, so often do you come up and blossom on the green turf. (Ovid 1921: Book x: 75-77)

Ram (*Aries* in Latin) is the term used in medieval astronomy and is one of signs of the zodiac. Here the movement of the sun is vividly personified and we could really feel the joy of returning of spring. An attractive, finished style in both poets. The following Ovid's expressions from (a) to (d), a flowing, elegant and fresh style, also a universal truth itself, still stir our hearts deeply, although it is written in B. C. That Ovid's works written about two thousand years ago still move us more profoundly than any great writers of modern times is indeed our extreme surprise. Thus juniors, young

lovers of literature and intellectuals of Europe, in other words, the youth who in a future will represent the intellectual elite of the society had learned excellent Latin works alongside of a difficult Latin grammar. Such studies were very precious as a good grounding in their later literary or social activities, for instance, as an art of public speech and debate, as an art of composition of poems and novels. In this way, *rhetoric* was an essential knowledge in Greek, Rome and in the rest of Europe. The phrase, *Rome, the capital of the world* (Ovid 1921: Book xv: 417), is as true as gospel. Such education of rhetoric for the youth seriously lacks in Japan.

(a) Now when Lucifer had banished night and ushered in the shining day, the east wind fell and moist clouds arose. (Ovid 1921: Book VIII: 407)

(b) The next morning had put the gleaming stars to flight when the chiefs, still uncertain what to do, ··· (Ovid 1921: Book XV: 411-3)

(c) O Time, thou great devourer, and thou, envious Age, together you destroy all things; and, slowly gnawing with your teeth, you finally consume all things in lingering death! (Ovid 1921: Book XV: 381)

(d) And worms that weave their white cocoons on the leaves of trees (a fact well known to country-folk) change into funereal butterflies. (Ovid 1921: Book XV: 391)

Butterflies in (d) symbolizes the thought that the departed soul is sometimes represented on tombstones as a butterfly, indeed, a striking and colorful metaphor.

Chaucer often cites in his works phrases of Seneca, a Roman philosopher, and Plato, a Greek, and it will be very natural to think that he was well informed of *Rhetoric* by Aristotle (384-322B.C.). Rhetoric teaches us the way of intellectual life, a speech or expression that produces a great impression on naïve, simple people, a way of successful argument in order to protect one's own interests and a way of speech that cleverly incite unsophisticated people to do what he plans. In order to be psychologically effective, there are many details of a plan for constructing sentences, such as the usage of conjunction, article, noun, numerals, etc.

> Dignity of style is assisted by these rules. (1) To use the description instead of the name: as by saying, not, 'Circle', but 'A plane surface, every point on the circumference of which is equally distant from the centre.' With a view to conciseness, on the contrary, we must use the name instead of the description. If there is anything ugly or unseemly in the idea, we should use the *name*, when this ugliness resides in the description, the *description*, when it resides in the name. (2) To express our meaning by metaphors and epithets—avoiding a poetical colour. (3)

To use the plural instead of the singular, as the poets do. Thus, *one* harbour being in question, still they say, 'to Achaian harbours.' Again- 'Here are the tablet's folds with many doors.' (4) To use the Article with each of two words, instead of connecting them with one Article: (Aristotle)

(Jebb 1909: 158)

The third explanation above about the usage of plural form is frequently observable in modern French novels and in the works of good poets such as Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904) and others. The form is plural, but the meaning is, of course, singular.

Old pond - *frogs* jumping in - sound of water (Hirakawa ed., L. Hearn 2000: 477)

Norman Davis well knows about the rhetorical uses of the plural as follows:

It is approximately true that the plural forms imply greater formality and politeness; yet they can be used even in intimate conversation, or within a family, in cultivated society ··· in Book 3 of *Troilus and Criseyde*, they are the prevailing forms used by the lovers to each other:

(*Riverside* 1987: XXXV)

The followings are good examples of rhetorical expression by Chaucer, the same air of exposition with Ovid and Aristotle and still now move us deeply.

(a) Eek Plato seith, whoso kan hym rede,
The wordes moote be cosyn to the dede. (General P 35: 741-2)

(b) And shortly, whan *the sonne was to reste*,
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon (General P 23: 30-31)

(c) And yet ik have alwey *a clotes tooth*, (Reeve 78: 3888)

(d) But ik am oold; me list not pley for age;
Gras tyme is doon; my fodder is now forage;
This white top writeth myne olde yeris; (Reeve 77: 3867-9)

(e) In Hooly Writ ye may yourself wel rede:
'Agayns an oold man, hoor upon his heed,
Ye sholde arise;' wherfore I yeve yow reed, (Pardoner 199: 742-4)

(A) and (e) are good ethical lessons to all, the latter being quoted from "Leviticus" (19: 32) in the *Old Testament* and (c) and (d) are metaphorical representations, *a coltes tooth* meaning desire

and *gras tyme* the youth, and (b) is an excellent personification of the movement of the sun. Latin, its literature and philosophy had exercised considerable influence on the vocabulary, phraseology, syntax and style(rhetoric) of the 14th century English as is also indicated by Jespersen. Under such circumstances, Chaucer, when a boy, had mastered Latin, its poems and rhetoric and was spiritually much enlightened by Roman writers.

> Latin has influenced English not only in vocabulary, but also in style and syntax. The absolute participle was introduced at a very early period in imitation of the Latin construction ··· Latin grammar was the only grammar taught in those days, and the only grammar found worthy of study and imitation. (Jespersen 1938: § 125-126: 117-8)

As we have seen, the influence of the languages of the Continent such as French, Latin and German on Chaucer's works has been discussed and illustrated minutely. Except such influence, the structure of the language of Chaucer, for instance, as to the sentence patterns and word order, is very similar to that of modern English, although we frequently need to consult good annotations for support. Furthermore the works well inform us of everyday life of London, literary flavor, people's view of Christianity and life at those times. In the 14th century when people get into some troubles such as being bitten by a poisonous snake or being caught in some incurable diseases of man or cattle such as cow, pig or sheep, people will have no alternative but to solely depend upon Church, as people couldn't yet obtain any scientific medical treatment. So in the following lines, a pastor earnestly appeals in a clear, resonant and beautiful voice to the helpless people to buy the holy water. Such superstitious practices as selling holy water, prayers and pilgrimages still do exist everywhere in modern world. The lines below sound too sorrowful and have pathetic and soul-stirring tones, also the lines the present writer likes best, so the works of Chaucer are indeed enduring masterpieces.

> 'Goode men,' I seye, 'taak of my wordes keep;
> If that this boon be wasshe in any welle,
> If cow, or calf, or sheep, or oxe swelle
> That any worm hath ete, or worm ystonge,
> Taak water of that welle and wassh his tonge,
> And it is hool anon; and forthermoore,
> Of pokkes and of scabbe, and every soore
> Shal every sheep be hool that of this welle

Drynketh a draughte. Taak kep eek what I telle: (Pardoner 194-5: 352-360)

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(英語学科教授　平林　幹郎)

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